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PLACE OF MASSACHUSETTS IN NATIONAL  
CRIME RATE STATISTICS FOR 1965

Compiled from the Uniform Crime Reports  
of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

by the

Division of Research and Statistics  
Massachusetts Department of Correction

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The Uniform Crime Reports of the Federal Bureau of Investigation contain crime statistics provided voluntarily by most police departments throughout the United States. Among these are the frequency figures of seven selected crimes and the rate of each of these crimes per 100,000 inhabitants of the reporting area. These crimes are 1) Murder (including non-negligent manslaughter) 2) Forcible rape 3) Robbery 4) Aggravated assault 5) Burglary 6) Larceny (of \$50 or over) and 7) Auto theft (including both joy riding and taking cars for resale or stripping.)

Additionally, it is the Federal Bureau of Investigation practice to add together these crimes and derive area rates for the total of all seven offenses per 100,000 population. This is called their "Crime Index" and purports to show the status and trends of "serious" crime. However, this practice of aggregating diverse offenses of varying degrees of seriousness and entirely different frequencies into one index has been criticized by criminological statisticians.

Because the three property crimes of burglary, larceny and auto theft occur much more often than the four more violent crimes of murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault, the F.B.I. Crime Index is heavily overweighted by the less serious but more numerous property crimes. This results in areas having comparatively few crimes of violence being given an excessively high overall Crime Index figure whenever one or more of their property crime rates are above average.

Take the state of Hawaii for example which has the lowest rate of all states in regard to forcible rape (0.8 per 100,000). By our method of giving the first rank to the state with the lowest rate, Hawaii ranks 1 for this offense. It ranks 19th in murder and 13th in both robbery and aggravated assault. However, in regard to the three property crimes it ranks 49th in burglary, 40th in larceny and 45th in auto theft. Therefore Hawaii's Crime Index figure is extremely high and results in an overall rank of 46. In other words the F.B.I. Crime Index inaccurately gives the impression that Hawaii has more "serious" crime than 45 other states -- despite its' well below average individual rates for each of the four more serious violent crimes against persons.

The contrary situation occurs for Mississippi which has high rates for murder and aggravated assault but low rates for property crimes. These low property crime rates result in an extremely low overall F.B.I. Crime Index for Mississippi. When Mississippi is thereby placed in overall rank ahead of Wisconsin, even though Wisconsin has well below average rates for all seven offenses, (particularly the

more serious offenses against persons) we believe this points up a lack of validity in the F.B.I. Crime Index as a tool for indicating the amount of serious crime in an area.

For the above reason this report does not use the combined F.B.I. Crime Indices. Instead we report only the comparative rank orders for each of the seven crimes individually. We believe this gives a more discriminating and a more valid picture of the incidence of crimes in various areas.

It also seems pertinent to mention that the Uniform Crime Reports have been criticized for using total population as its base for crime rates. Other authorities state that the younger generation, which commits most of the crimes, has been increasing in numbers at a faster rate than the total population. If we knew the numbers of the below 30 age group in all states we might then find that the markedly increasing rates of crime shown by the Uniform Crime Reports were exaggerated. For example, a 1965 study in California by the Space - General Corporation, which compared crime increases with the increases of the 14 to 29 age group, concluded that there "-- was a relatively constant crime rate for both juvenile and adult groups over the past five years."

However, since we do not have at hand crime rates from all areas based more precisely on the population of the crime committing younger generation, we are limited to making country wide comparisons taken from the Uniform Crime Report rates based on total populations. We are, however, avoiding references to the percentage of increase of any offenses for any area because such F.B.I. percentage increases may well be overstating the situation.

As an appendix we list the rank order of all fifty states for each of the seven selected offenses. Our abbreviated table abstracted from the more comprehensive appendix table shows the rank order of Massachusetts with regard to the rate for each crime, but only the five lowest and five highest rate states and the rate for each offense for the entire United States as well as for our New England area.

ABBREVIATED TABLE

RATES OF CRIMES BY SELECTED STATES AND AREAS\*

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Rank	Murder		Forcible Rape		Robbery		Aggravated Assault		Burglary		Larceny		Auto Theft	
	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000
1	Vt.	.5	Hawaii	.8	Maine	4.0	Vt.	10.8	N.D.	206.8	W.Va.	127.5	W.Va.	69.4
2	N.D.	.9	N.H.	2.1	Vt.	4.5	N.H.	11.7	W.Va.	253.9	Vt.	135.0	S.D.	73.7
3	Iowa	1.3	Wisc.	3.6	N.D.	4.6	Iowa	20.1	S.D.	264.3	Miss.	157.9	N.D.	76.8
4	Minn.	1.4	R.I.	3.8	N.H.	6.9	N.D.	23.6	Miss.	285.5	N.H.	183.0	Miss.	77.3
5	Utah	1.5	W.Va.	4.2	S.D.	9.2	Neb.	28.2	Wisc.	286.5	N.D.	183.9	Ark.	79.9
	N.E.	2.1	N.E.	5.0	N.E.	26.6	N.E.	43.6	N.E.	520.2	N.E.	303.8	U.S.	251.0
	MASS. (14th)	2.4	MASS. (12th)	5.4	MASS. (30th)	40.0	MASS. (15th)	50.7	MASS. (32nd)	554.5	MASS. (21st)	320.7	MASS. (50th)	(see below)
46	U.S.	5.1	U.S.	11.6	U.S.	61.4	U.S.	106.6	U.S.	605.3	U.S.	393.3	N.E.	354.0
47	Fla.	8.9	Ala.	17.8	Mo.	93.3	Ga.	147.0	Ariz.	816.5	N.Y.	593.9	Ill.	379.9
48	Miss.	8.9	Ariz.	17.8	Nev.	97.5	Ala.	149.1	Nev.	878.0	Ala.	593.2	Ala.	407.1
49	S.C.	9.6	Mo.	18.1	Mich.	102.6	Md.	181.5	Fla.	957.0	Ariz.	638.5	Nev.	437.1
50	Ga.	11.3	Mich.	20.3	Calif.	113.3	Fla.	188.6	Hawaii	980.9	Calif.	712.0	Calif.	439.6
	Ala.	11.4	Calif.	21.2	Ill.	164.8	N.C.	216.4	Calif.	1202.6	Nev.	846.1	MASS.	533.5

\*Data taken from Table 2 in the UNIFORM CRIME REPORTS-1965 issued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Viewing the abbreviated table we see that in regard to murder, rape and aggravated assault Massachusetts compares well. Its rates for these crimes are only slightly higher than for New England as a whole. For each of these offenses Massachusetts rates are well below the United States average. More than two thirds of the states have higher rates than Massachusetts for murder, rape and aggravated assault.

For the offense of larceny Massachusetts drops to a rank of 21. However, the United States rate is still higher and about 60% of the individual states have higher rates for larceny than does Massachusetts.

For the crimes of robbery and burglary Massachusetts drops to ranks of 30 and 32 respectively. Yet the United States rate is still higher for both of these crimes, although only about 35% of the individual states have higher rates than Massachusetts for robbery and burglary.

However, for its many auto thefts Massachusetts (with 533.5 per 100,000 people) has the highest rate of all fifty states. It exceeds the rate of the next highest state by nearly a hundred thefts. In fact the Massachusetts rate is so high that it pushes the rate for the entire New England area well above the United States average. If it were not for the excessively high Massachusetts rate the average of the other four New England states would be over a hundred auto thefts per 100,000 below the national average. To report this in another way: Massachusetts has over four hundred more auto thefts per 100,000 than the average of the other New England states. Having the unhappy distinction of being the worst state in the country in regard to reported auto thefts we can paraphrase a current advertisement and say "We must be doing something wrong!"

Nelson N. Cochrane  
Supervisor of Research  
Massachusetts Department of  
Correction      September 1966

## APPENDIX

## RATES OF CRIMES BY STATES, NEW ENGLAND AREA AND THE UNITED STATES\*

Rank	Murder & non- legitimate manslaughter			Forcible Rape			Robbery			Aggravated Assault			Burglary			Larceny \$50 & over			Auto Theft		
	Area	Rate per 100,000		Area	Rate per 100,000		Area	Rate per 100,000		Area	Rate per 100,000		Area	Rate per 100,000		Area	Rate per 100,000		Area	Rate per 100,000	
1	U.S.	5.1		U.S.	11.6		U.S.	61.4		U.S.	106.6		U.S.	605.3		U.S.	393.3		U.S.	251.0	
	N.E.	2.1		N.E.	5.0		N.E.	26.6		N.E.	43.6		N.E.	520.2		N.E.	303.8		N.E.	354.0	
	Vt.	.5		Hawaii	.8		Maine	4.0		Vt.	10.8		N.D.	206.8		W.Va.	127.5		W.Va.	69.4	
2	N.D.	.9		N.H.	2.1		Vt.	4.5		N.H.	11.7		W.Va.	253.9		Vt.	135.0		S.D.	73.7	
3	Iowa	1.3		Wisc.	3.6		N.D.	4.6		Iowa	20.1		S.D.	264.3		Miss.	157.9		N.D.	76.8	
4	Minn.	1.4		R.I.	3.8		N.H.	6.9		N.D.	23.6		Miss.	285.5		N.H.	183.0		Miss.	77.3	
5	Utah	1.5		W.Va.	4.2		S.D.	9.2		Neb.	28.2		Wisc.	286.5		N.D.	183.9		Ark.	79.9	
6	Wisc.	1.5		Maine	4.3		Idaho	10.1		Del.	28.1		Ark.	292.0		Maine	192.5		N.H.	87.7	
7	Conn.	1.6		Iowa	4.5		Wisc.	11.5		Wisc.	29.5		Iowa	304.3		Pa.	200.6		Maine	90.0	
8	S.D.	1.6		Neb.	5.1		Iowa	12.8		Maine	30.4		N.H.	316.5		Ark.	232.2		Vt.	98.0	
9	Mont.	1.7		N.D.	5.1		Miss.	14.4		Minn.	39.5		Vt.	324.0		S.D.	235.3		Idaho	102.3	
10	Idaho	2.0		Conn.	5.2		W.Va.	14.4		S.D.	41.4		Maine	356.6		N.C.	238.8		Iowa	104.7	
11	Maine	2.1		Minn.	5.2		Mont.	15.9		Wyo.	43.2		Idaho	358.8		Neb.	246.2		Ala.	106.9	
12	R.I.	2.1		MASS.	5.4		Wyo.	17.9		Conn.	43.5		Wyo.	363.3		Wisc.	251.5		N.C.	107.7	
13	Wash.	2.2		Idaho	5.5		Hawaii	18.7		Hawaii	46.3		N.C.	378.7		Ohio	253.5		Kans.	122.7	
14	MASS.	2.4		Del.	5.9		R.I.	19.0		Mont.	47.5		Neb.	384.8		Tenn.	254.5		Wyo.	136.2	
15	Neb.	2.4		Vt.	6.5		Conn.	19.3		MASS.	50.7		Pa.	413.5		Iowa	258.8		S.C.	148.1	

# RATES OF CRIMES BY STATES (continued)

Rank	Murder & non-egligent manslaughter		Forcible Rape		Robbery		Aggravated Assault		Burglary		Larceny \$50 & over		Auto Theft	
	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000
16	Kans.	2.7	Ky.	6.6	S.C.	21.4	Idaho	53.6	Ky.	444.8	Ala.	295.6	Ky.	151.7
17	N.H.	2.7	S.D.	6.8	N.C.	21.6	R.I.	53.6	La.	452.3	Kans	299.3	Wisc.	153.5
18	Wyo.	2.9	Miss.	6.9	Neb.	21.9	W.Va.	55.4	Mont.	452.9	Okl.	301.5	Neb.	162.8
19	Hawaii	3.2	Mont.	7.8	Utah	23.1	Utah	56.0	Ala.	465.6	S.C.	304.5	Va.	163.1
20	N.J.	3.2	N.J.	8.9	Ark.	23.7	Ore.	59.3	Kans.	467.5	Ga.	317.4	Tenn.	166.7
21	Ore.	3.4	N.C.	8.9	Kans	24.0	Ky.	60.4	S.C.	467.6	MASS.	320.7	Tex.	186.2
22	Colo.	3.5	Ohio	8.9	Tenn.	28.6	Wash.	60.4	Ohio	470.5	Va.	322.3	Ohio	189.9
23	Ind.	3.5	Utah	8.9	Ala.	28.7	Ohio	60.7	Va.	483.3	Conn.	324.4	Okl.	190.0
24	Pa.	3.5	Kans.	9.1	Ga.	29.8	Ind.	62.8	Ga.	487.4	La.	326.0	Wash.	191.5
25	Ohio	3.6	Ind.	9.5	Wash.	30.3	Kans.	71.2	Ind.	516.8	N.J.	327.0	Ga.	193.5
26	W.Va.	4.0	Pa.	9.7	Ky.	36.7	Pa.	72.0	Tenn.	523.0	Minn.	331.7	Mont.	198.0
27	Mich.	4.4	N.Y.	9.8	Okl.	38.0	Okl.	77.7	Okl.	527.4	Ind.	334.6	Minn.	201.6
28	Okl.	4.4	Wash.	10.2	Va.	38.5	Colo.	78.6	Minn.	530.5	Mo.	341.9	Ore.	202.5
29	N.Y.	4.6	Ark.	10.4	Ala.	39.9	Ala.	85.0	N.Y.	593.9	Ky.	346.2	La.	202.6
30	Calif.	4.7	Ala.	10.6	MASS.	40.0	N.J.	86.3	Ill	550.3	Tex.	346.2	Fla.	207.8
31.	Ariz.	5.0	S.C.	10.7	Minn.	40.3	Tenn.	91.1	Ala.	554.5	Del.	348.1	Utah	208.5

# RATES OF CRIMES BY STATES (continued)

Rank	Murder & non-negligent manslaughter		Forcible Rape		Robbery		Aggravated Assault		Burglary		Larceny \$50 & over		Auto Theft	
	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000
32	Del.	5.1	Tex.	10.8	Tex.	42.0	Nev.	95.2	MASS.	554.5	Mont.	359.0	Conn.	217.4
33	Ill.	5.2	Va.	10.8	N.M.	42.7	Ark.	95.9	Conn.	563.5	Ill.	360.2	Pa.	218.1
34	Ky.	5.3	La.	11.1	Ore.	46.0	Ariz.	113.9	R.I.	596.4	Idaho	394.9	N.M.	219.9
35	Ark.	5.9	Okl.	11.1	La.	51.3	Miss.	117.4	Del.	600.6	N.M.	401.8	Ind.	234.8
36	N.M.	6.1	Tenn.	11.1	Pa.	51.4	N.Y.	117.5	Utah	606.9	R.I.	423.2	Del.	244.8
37	Ala.	6.3	Wyo.	11.5	Ohio	51.6	N.M.	129.2	Wash.	611.1	Wyo.	426.5	Colo.	248.7
38	Va.	6.6	Ore.	11.9	Colo.	54.5	Mich.	129.8	N.J.	621.7	Mich.	457.5	Mo.	262.3
39	Md.	6.7	Fla.	13.3	Del.	54.9	La.	132.6	Ore.	636.1	Wash.	457.8	N.Y.	283.1
40	Mo.	6.7	Ca.	13.4	N.J.	55.4	Va.	133.9	Md.	638.7	Hawaii	477.1	Ariz.	287.3
41	Tex.	7.5	N.M.	13.4	Ariz.	55.7	S.C.	134.9	Colo.	651.0	Md.	488.5	N.J.	294.4
42	N.C.	7.9	Md.	13.9	Md.	55.9	Ill.	136.7	Tex.	674.0	Utah	489.4	Md.	306.0
43	Tenn.	8.0	Nev.	15.5	N.Y.	61.3	Tex.	137.2	N.M.	701.3	Colo.	492.0	R.I.	319.9
44	La.	8.1	Ill.	16.0	Md.	83.0	Miss.	139.9	Mich.	705.2	Ore.	527.7	Mich.	320.1
45	Nev.	8.4	Colo.	16.2	Fla.	88.6	Calif.	142.9	Mo.	763.0	Fla.	546.6	Hawaii	363.0
46	Fla.	8.9	Ala.	17.8	Mo.	93.3	Ga.	147.0	Ariz.	816.5	N.Y.	593.9	Ill.	379.9
47	Miss.	8.9	Ariz.	17.8	Nev.	97.5	Ala.	149.1	Nev.	878.0	Ala.	599.2	Ala.	407.1



# RATES OF CRIMES BY STATES (concluded)

Rank	Murder & non-negligent manslaughter		Forcible Rape		Robbery		Aggravated Assault		Burglary		Larceny \$50 & over		Auto Theft	
	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000	Area	Rate per 100,000
48	S.C.	9.6	Mo.	18.1	Mich	102.6	Md.	181.5	Fla.	957.0	Ariz.	638.5	Nev.	437.1
49	Ga.	11.3	Mich.	20.3	Calif.	113.3	Fla.	188.6	Hawaii	980.9	Calif.	712.0	Calif.	439.6
50	Ala.	11.4	Calif.	21.2	Ill.	164.8	N.C.	216.4	Calif.	1209.6	Nev.	846.1	MASS.	533.5

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